Traits of a Change Agent: Prophetic Approach

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Mankind is Losing Time

- [Allah takes pledge] By time! Surely humanity is in [grave] loss, except those who have faith, do good, and urge each other to the truth, and urge each other to perseverance.

Surah Al Asr 1 – 3.

Allah’s Favor unto Mankind

- Allāh [Sovereign Rub ul Alameen] is the savior of [all] those who have faith. He brings them out from darknesses into the light. And those who disbelieve - their companions are ṭāghūt [Satan and false deities]. They take them out of the light into darknesses. Those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.

Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayat 257

Allah's Sunnah

- "You shall never find in the way [i.e., religion] of Allāh any change, and you will never find in the way of Allāh any alteration.

Surah Fatir Ayat 43

  - Allah revealed His guidance to Prophet Adam[pbuh] in the heavens, he was then sent to plant Earth, so he and his children could live accordingly.
  - Allah kept sending his [same] guidance through His chosen Prophets again and again until the last Prophet Muhammad[pbuh.]
  - Some people embraced the guidance, others blatantly rejected it. The trend is continuing even today…

Prophets’ Mission

- Allah had chosen Prophets amongst His slaves for the salvation of mankind through.
- The Prophets’ mission consisted of; -
  - Guiding the mankind into Islam,
  - Establishing Allah’s rule [Shariah] on his planet earth, and
  - Cleansing the illusion of false deities and idol worshiping

Prophetic Analogy of Change

- Paradoxically, as the time passed by some men changed Allah's rules [shariah]; some innovated false deities and idol worshiping; and some blatantly denied Allah's religion altogether

- So, Allah sent Prophets[pbut] to revive Allah's true religion and separate it from the alterations made by the men.

- How did each Prophet[pbuh] managed to reform [change] for better has a lesson for us to follow in our personal, social, economic and political arena and in organizational context.

- Let us learn from the traditions of select Prophets[pbut]

Prophet Ibrahim[pbuh]

- Devoted his life for the sake of Allah alone
- Followed his intellect and rejected idol worshiping
- Searched for the reality through reasoning and later divine revelation
- Contested with the people around him
- Confronted with the prevailing elite and the culture
- Faced man made tribulations and challenges
- Struggled to revive “Allah’s true Religion – Islam”

Prophet Ibrahim^{pbuh}

- Lessons to be learnt
  - Goal – Be motivated for a mission not trivial rewards
  - Never to be complacent – Have the courage to say No to the fake beliefs and unreasonable practices
  - Search for the truth – Keep the determination to find that is true and reasonable
  - Reflect – Call out against the fake assumptions and unreasonable values
  - Confront – Stand against the ill-fated paradigms and wrong practices
  - Perseverance – Be steadfast against all tribulations and challenges
  - Reform – Impart wisdom, improve paradigms and change practices, based on sound reasoning

Prophet Musa^{pbuh}

- Devoted his life for the sake of Allah alone
- Grew up under a non-believing and tyrant ruler but did not accept his influence
- Migrated to save himself, then returned with a clear mission to accomplish
- Confronted with the elite and the powerful
- Got his fellow men freed from control of the tyrant ruler – Pharaoh
- Led the followers to the light of Allah's true religion – Islam

Prophet Musa^{pbuh}

- Lessons to be learnt
  - Goal – Be motivated for a mission not trivial rewards
  - Never take negative influence – Be emotionally strong and not to adopt others' enticing practices and culture that are fake and unjust
  - Take a Pause – When going gets tough distance oneself strategically to gain strength and re-intervene after a pause
  - Confront – Stand against the tyrant and powerful for justice with conviction and courage
  - Be a savior – Use tactical approach to remove obstacles and deal with challenges
  - Reform – Impart wisdom and change practices, based on sound reasoning

Prophet Essa^{pbuh}

- Devoted his life for the sake of Allah alone
- Faced rejection and resistance from within
- Had conspiracy against him
- When felt short of strength, invited people to join hands for the divine cause.
- Cleansed “Allah’s true religion – Islam” from man made alterations and false deities

Prophet Essa^{pbuh}

- Lessons to be learnt
  - Goal – Be motivated for a mission not trivial rewards
  - Never give up – Show your credentials and strengths
  - Focus on your purpose – Continue playing smart
  - Build Bonds – Establish teams for a productive cause
  - Reform – Impart wisdom and change practices, based on reasoning

Prophet Muhammad[pbuh]

- Devoted his life for the sake of Allah alone
- Commanded respect, credibility and reputation
- Faced bias, rejections, and tribulations
- Migrated to build and consolidate strength
- Pondered for truth until divine revelation was sent
- Always up-held justice at all cost
- Kindhearted and concerned
- Treated people in a befitting manner despite their biased behaviors
- Fought against tyrant and disbelievers, but never for personal gratification
- Invited people to Islam and educated them

Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh}

- Lessons to be learnt
  - Goal – Be motivated for a mission not trivial rewards
  - Discipline – Be a man of ethics, morals and honesty
  - Commitment – Keep focus on goals [tomorrow], ignore trivial problems
  - Build strength – Unleash available opportunities to get stronger
  - Introspect – Say no to assumptions and logics, keep reasoning to find truth
  - Justice – Follow equality and equal treatment with everyone
  - Concern – Have real concern and love for everyone
  - Respect – Give respect to everyone, even to those who disrespect you
  - Confront – Fight to establish rule
  - Lead – Invite and educate fellows for success

Conclusion

- Our traits are the reflection of our parents, teachers, fellow human beings, etc. We take influence from them to shape our personalities

- Traits of the Prophets[pbut] are the best and most reliable of all. We have lessons in their personalities for every aspect of our lives.

- In this more than brief account I have touched upon the tip of their traits in bringing the reforms in their respective times. This has lessons for us to develop more effective traits as Change Agents